2001 IRM Seminar

A Telecast Originating from the BLM National Training Center in Phoenix, Arizona

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Announcer: The Bureau of Land Management Satellite Network presents live from the BLM National Training Center in Phoenix, Arizona, and home of the 2001 IRM Seminar, The Big Picture, providing leadership for the I.T future. An interactive forum with BLM's top management on the state of information technology and its future. And now, the host of your program, Hord Tipton.

H. Tipton: Good morning. Welcome to our broadcast today on the state of information technology in BLM. We're really excited today to be broadcasting from the 2001 information resource management seminar that is going on here this week. We wanted to do this broadcast so that everyone could participate in the event both here and out in our field offices. Later on in our show, we'll be taking questions from our conference attendees who are watching us live today from NTC's Washington Room. On today's show we have some of the top management for the agency and the Department of the Interior and we're going to get the opportunity to hear from everyone both here in Phoenix and also live from Washington D.C. So I'd like to first introduce our panelists in Phoenix. First up we have Piet deWitt, acting Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals at the department of interior. Good morning, Piet.

P. deWitt: Thank you very much for that invitation to join you here in Phoenix.

H. Tipton: Also with us today is Michelle Chavez, BLM's New Mexico State Director. Good morning, Michelle.

M. Chavez: Good morning, tip. I am pleased to be here and I understand we have quite a bit of attendance at the seminar. I'm looking forward to interacting with them on preparing ourselves for our future in I.T.

H. Tipton: Next we have Karen Siderelis, the Chief Geographic Information Officer for the U.S. Geological Survey. Welcome, Karen.

K. Siderelis: It's great to be here. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the BLM/IRM Seminar and have already begun to enjoy myself and found interesting and valuable things at the seminar.

H. Tipton: We're certainly glad to have you. Originally we planned to have Daryl White, the department's chief information officer and Pete Culp, Assistant Director for Minerals, Realty and Resource Protection but unfortunately they were not able to attend at the last minute. Now, also from Washington, D.C. we have Nina Rose Hatfield, BLM's Acting Director. Good morning, Nina Rose.

Dir. Hatfield: Well, good morning. It's great to join you all from Washington and we're looking forward to this conversation on a very important subject for the Bureau.

H. Tipton: With Nina today is Bob Doyle, Assistant Director for business and fiscal resources and welcome to you, Bob.

B. Doyle: It's a pleasure to be here working with you.

H. Tipton: We have Henri Bisson, Assistant Director for Renewable Resources and Planning. Hi, Henri.

H. Bisson: Glad to be on the broadcast today as well. This is an extremely important topic for all of us in the resource program areas and look forward to having this discussion.

H. Tipton: Thanks to all of you and we are looking forward to a great broadcast. Just first off, real quickly, I thought I would mention what's going on here at the seminar. As Michelle mentioned, we to have a very high attendance rate, I think there is about 350 people here. We are coming out at the seams at the NTC and are focussing on some key BLM issues. Among these are Data Standards, including how we develop, adopt and enforce them, enterprise architecture, including the GIS, emerging technology such as wireless communications and telecommuting, IRM budgets and workforce issues, including skill shortages, retiring workforce and workforce planning. Also, before we move on, I would like to take a moment to mention that late or in our Brad cast, we will be taking or questions and comments. You can participate by either faxing us a thought or picking up the phone and calling. Please use the numbers on your screen. We will get to your calls just as quickly as possible. But now let's get started and turn to our acting Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals, Mr. Piet deWitt for opening comments. Piet, what's the view from the sixth floor?

P. deWitt: I know that people in the Bureau are very interested in the direction the new administration is going to set for us. Unfortunately, I can't shed a lot of light on that topic at this time. I do know, however, that in the short-term we are be -- being asked to do more with less and that message has been delivered clearly. That message should resonate throughout the Bureau and have particular relevance for this conference. I believe information technology is the key to be able to do more with less in the future. The appropriate technologies in the hands of well trained people will increase our productivity and quality of the products they produce. The challenges for the Bureau are to find the appropriate technologies and train our people in their effective use. When I say people, I am focussing on the Bureau personnel closest to the lands we manage. Technologies that don't help these people do their jobs better are a waste of our precious

resources. I believe the so-called information technology community must maintain a close and open relationship with our people on the ground and provide the support they need to do their job better in the future. I understand that the Bureau is in the process of developing an information technology architecture to support its future. I strongly support the concept of a unified architecture. I am personally and painfully aware of the problems associated with multiple architectures, the Assistant Secretary's office must deal with a separate architecture in each of its bureaus. The problems associated with communications alone have taken considerable time and effort to resolve and still others remain. Superimposed on the Bureau's efforts to develop a coherent information technology architecture is the looming retirement of a significant portion of the workforce. This presents the Bureau with both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge will be to save the valuable institutional knowledge and insight that the retiring workforce has accumulated through years of dedicated public service. The opportunity will be the arrival of the first generation that has grown one computers, a generation on the whole that will have more -- be more comfortable and conversant with information technology than the predecessors. Our challenge here then is to set the stage for their success in carrying the bureau oat best they can into the 21st century. I believe the Bureau has taken the appropriate steps to meet the challenges of this administration and the future beyond. This conference is one of those steps. I wish you all well.

H. Tipton: Thanks very much, Piet. Next I would like to turn it over to our Acting Director, Nina Rose Hatfield, for her view of the big picture from Washington. Nina?

Dir. Hatfield: Thank you, tip. As I reflect on the sweeping changes in the information arena that have gone on in BLM over the last few years, it's really exciting to see the strides we've made, and it seems to me that those are so important because certainly our future is determined by how successfully we manage our data and our information technology. Two years ago, as we look at what's happened to us, we were meeting monthly with the appropriations committee, and we were the target of several GAO investigators who spent almost full time looking at how we were carrying our programs in terms of information technology. This has changed for us over the last six months, and there's some really good reasons why. We're the first Bureau in the department to have a full-time CIO and I think that's a recognition of how important that information technology is to us in the Bureau and the fact it needs full time attention. We're also the first in the department of the interior to establish an investment board, and the investment board has the job to assure that we know what it is that we're going to spend our money on and that we stay on track, that when we've committed to making an investment in a technology application, that it doesn't grow beyond what it is that we want to do with it and how much we want to spend. So that's a very important factor in terms of managing our information technology. In addition to that, we've really focused on some project management techniques and we've trained people to do project management, and we think that's going to bode very well for us in the future as we try to do a more professional job of managing our projects. And very importantly, I believe, is that we've learned some lessons from experiences that we've had in the past and so that we are -- we try to change our approach to development by emphasizing off-the-shelf software and doing modular improvements, testing those, making sure they work for our workforce before we move on and before we deploy them. So all of those, I think, are very key to the track that we're on in terms of making information technology work for us in the

Bureau. Certainly a major initiative for us is the Bureau architecture. Now, I think of the architecture as being a road map, a pathway that describes what our work is and then relates the data, the hardware and the software that we're going to need to make the work more efficient for us in the Bureau. So these are major improvements for us. We've been working on the architecture now, continue to have some work to do there but we have made an enormous amount of progress. At the same time, there are some other areas of improvement we still need to work on. For example, we want to have an Enterprise GIS system which will create a coherent Bureauwide design for GIS technology. I can't think of anything that's more critical to us when you realize that about 75% of our data has a spatial component to it. So it's a key ingredient to making our data more useful to our employees. And likewise, we have to apply some Bureauwide standards. It seems to me that this is absolutely essential that we describe and adhere to Data Standards. It will enable us to use our data across data applications, numerous applications and it will greatly decrease the costs that we have in terms of operations. And certainly as we move forward and try to do things with the use of the Internet and with e-commerce, all of these things will allow us to be more efficient in things like procurement and allowing our customers direct access to interact with us. Also allows our customers to do some of the things that we may have done for them in the past. So this is going to make us more efficient and much more cost effective. So, Piet, to me what we're trying to do with information technology is to create the capability where we can use our resources to be much more effective in what we can do. So from my view, that's sort of the big picture of what's going on. We have made enormous progress and I think that we're in a position now to move forward and make a lot more progress.

H. Tipton: Thanks, Nina. That certainly sounds like a lot of work. Next I'd like to turn it over to Michelle Chavez, director of New Mexico for comments. Michelle, how are things down in the land of enchantment?

M. Chavez: Well in the land of enchantment and in the field offices around the Bureau we're facing interesting challenges, both in preparing ourselves for long-term I.T. and also dealing with some short-term issues that are on our plates right now today. Clearly one of the things that we're all facing and are really seeing significantly in the field offices is the whole concept of workforce planning and looking at how our workforce is going to look in the future and what skills we need there. We certainly recognize that we have to concentrate on building our technology and have highly qualified employees who can do that work. But we're also having to make some hard decisions about what kind of work is appropriate for us to have in our staffs and what kind of work we could better and more efficiently get done through contracting. Of course, we're always going to have to have the skills to oversee those contractors, and that takes some technical skill as well. But making those decisions are what we're facing right now today. Along with that, of course, is just generally deciding what we should continue to be doing as an agency and what we should perhaps not be doing any longer. Those kinds of questions are very frightening for employees, especially if there's an employee whose work suddenly is being identified as potential contract work, and their sense of value for the organization is going to be challenged, and we have to be very sensitive to that and work to help all of our employees understand that they are important to us and valuable to us. Along with that, of course, is going to be some retraining and developing skills in our -- both in our I.T. employees as well as users. I think we have some

users, resource specialists in the field, who have become very accustomed to calling up our GIS folks and saying, "you know, I need a map of this wildlife habitat area, could you get it for me," and lo and behold a map is produced and they're on their way. What We're going to be asking our resource specialists to do is to spend more time understanding the nuances of the data and punching those buttons themselves and making maps for themselves. So user skills are going to be something we're building as well. I think with the fact that the office of management, budget and this administration is going to be looking more at reducing our layers and getting more of our capability right to our customers, we are going to be challenged to make sure that we meet those needs and continue to do our job well. Nina mentioned the chief information officer and information technology investment board concept. We're right in the throes of adjusting to that new way of doing business. It's new enough that we're a little bit uncomfortable about it in the field. But I think we recognize that this approach is going to give us better coordination, especially between the business side of our organization and the resource side. Nina mentioned we have some lessons learned from the past and clearly one of the things I think we've learned is that you can no longer have a situation where you have systems administrators developing the capability without fully understanding what the user needs are. I kind of harkin Ken it to the description of the user sitting on one side of the brick wall, very busily creating a fantastic system they are convinced works very well, and throwing it over that brick wall to the user, and the user looks at and it says, "gee, this isn't at all what I need," and throwing back comments over that brick wall. I think with the CIO, IT2B approach to things, we are tearing down the brick wall and providing the opportunity for direct coordination between the users and the systems developers. Along with this, especially with the IT2B approach, we can look forward to a much more established funding process, a little more predictable, focused on more of a strategic approach to building our funding capability and recognizing where we have to concentrate on continually updating our technology capability. Nina also mentioned standardization and I think that's going to be one of the areas where we're going to see some significant benefits. It's a little hard right now in the field because everyone has their sense of ownership for their data and how they collect it and how they record it, and if we can move ourselves more towards recognizing that standard data is not only going to help us to do our business internally in the agency, but to help us spread out our capability, that's going to be a key. So I think with that kind of an approach, we will be able to look at our work processes and continually be working towards reengineering them so that they are the most efficient that we can give. One of the other areas that in the field we're certainly having some very direct experience with is this whole concept of sharing and building partnerships. Throughout the Bureau there are different little pockets of experiences where we're sitting down with our sister agencies, with state government and trying to put on the table all of those capabilities that we have and see where we can fill in the gaps for each other. Service first, of course, is one of the starting points for that experience, and we've had some successes in sharing telephone switches, radio towers and those sorts of things. As a matter of fact, we've -- in southwest we've built a telecommunications working group that is bringing National Park Service, DOD, of all agencies and state government together along with the Fish &

Wildlife Service and BLM and the Forest Service to see where we can take advantage of our like systems and gaps in our capability. So there's a lot of that kind of thing that we're experiencing right now immediately and also recognizing that this is a strategic approach to the future of our Field Offices. So we're going to be facing a lot of changes, and, tip, I think we're up

to the challenge.

H. Tipton: That's really great, Michelle. It's really encouraging when we see our State Directors on top of these type of issues and really recognizing the need to do that innovation. We have long recognized Michelle as a leader in the I.T. world and I know she has several initiatives ongoing down there to further integrating the I.T. Along with the business and making this generally more efficient. Now I'd like to go back to Washington again and hear this time from Bob Doyle. Bob's Assistant Director for Business and Fiscal Resource. Bob, tell us some good news.

B. Doyle: Ok. Some good news, tip, is the rain has stopped, the skies have cleared and the Red Sox are still in first place. What I do want to say, though, in terms of technology is that I.T. has been very instrumental in a number of things we're trying to do in the business side of things in BLM. As many of you are aware, both OMB and Congress over the last several years have expressed a strong interest in agencies managing by performance, and they've lately been talking a great deal about linking budgets with agency performance. What we've done here in the business community through I.T., things that we have done with them, I asked things we've done with finance and cost accounting, position us very well to respond to the interests of Congress and OMB. There's a great deal of interest in electronic government. The public is demanding a greater opportunity to participate in the government process. The public has had experience. They know what technology can do for them through their experience in the private sector and they expect no less from their government. So there's great opportunity for us to use technology to expand the public's participation in the governmental process in our decision-making process and there's also an opportunity here for us to educate the public to be able to expand and broaden their horizons and to help them better understand what it is we're trying to do as a government, government agency. Right now we're doing a great deal by sharing information on the web, things like the environmental impact statements and resource management plans and records of decision, all of that demonstrates our ability and expands our capability to share information with the public so they can better understand what's underlying our decision and what's underlying our actions. All of this goes towards eye instilling confidence of the public in their government. But then we need to move beyond just the sharing of information, and some of the things we're trying to do in the business community is to move from information sharing to transactional processing so that we can bring government closer to the people. I think one best illustration of what I'm talking about is something that we're trying to do in concert with Oregon office in terms of making recreational permits available over the Internet. The intent here is to make, allow individual citizens to buy a permit to be able to pay for it over the Internet and then to be able to print it locally. All without having to have any manual intervention. I think we're well on our way. We have a few things to work out, but in the end, what it will look like is a citizen can get on at any time of the day, be able to request a recreation permit, pay for it through their credit card, that information is then checked with the bank, information is then fed into our collection and billing system, which in turn goes to the finance system, which, in turn, shares information with the recreation system. All of that is done electronically behind the scenes without any manual intervention, and it's a good illustration of a citizen-centered public service and a streamlining of our business process without any human intervention, as I said. Financial information is recorded. Program information is collected. All without any manual data entry.

And service is provided to public 24/7. People don't need to -- aren't required to go to the government facility in order to be serviced. That's the kind of thing we need to be thinking about. But to be sure, there are a number of challenges that we face. We talk about concerns about security. There are security issues across the government related to our systems and our equipment and it's going to require a great deal of energy and investment for all the entities to address. Also there's concern about the proprietary information that we have in our systems, concerns about -- and challenges about the way we go about collecting the data, how we use the data, and how we protect it. There's a great deal of citizen concern about that data that we hold. There's also a continuous challenge in terms of expanding our E-government. We need to automate not only our existing processes but think about reengineering the processes, think about doing things differently than we have been doing. We don't want to just simply do them quicker. We want to be smarter about how we do them. Lastly, there are things we need to be challenged relative to the acquisition of systems and equipment. There's an opportunity for us if we act as an enterprise to be able to use the leverage that we have in buying equipment and services as -- in a bulk form so that we can capitalize on the economies of scale and the costs that go along with that. Also, there's a need for us to be able to manage the contracts for the acquisitions of these systems and services so that we can ensure that whatever contractor we have providing the services to us are performing and achieving the outcomes that we want. So we have developed a number of training courses to help our people better manage contracts and to achieve the results that we're looking for. So I'm looking forward to the discussions with the group and your folks there and to talk about some of the challenges and issues in the business community.

H. Tipton: Those certainly are some large issues, Bob. Coordination must be a nightmare on all of this. You guys during a great job. Bob and I have to do a lot of coordinating amongst ourselves, because as most of you probably know, we really spend a lot of our dollars in the information technology world and we have to constantly monitor ourselves just to make sure we're getting the best value for that dollar. We have several questions already being sent in on fax and otherwise. So, again, I courage in you during the course of the broadcast to go ahead and send those questions in and we will start addressing those possibly even after the conclusion of the opening remarks. Today we are very fortunate in having as our guest, our sister agency I guess is the best way to say that, we have Karen Siderelis from the U.S. Geological Survey, and Karen is the Chief Geographic Information Officer. That's kind of a tongue twister, Karen. But could you give us some views on what's going over in the USGS?

K. Siderelis: Certainly, Hord. Let me say thank you for the opportunity to be here at the IRM Seminar at BLM and I'm very pleased to be representing the U.S. Geological Survey. I've been with the Survey now less than five months, and I've found it to be a fabulous organization with many opportunities, and I thought I would share with you a little bit about what USGS is and how that relates to our directions and information technology and information management. As most of you know, probably more than I do, USGS is a science agency in the department of interior. Unlike BLM, it manages land -- that manage land or other agencies with regulatory responsibilities, USGS is a science organization. We are organized along discipline lines. We have four areas of disciplinary focus, water, biology, geology and geography, our mapping. We also now are organized into three regions. We have about 10,000 employees, similar, I think, to BLM, and our budget on any given year approaches about a billion dollars. Over the last year, the

USGS has been putting a lot of energy into an initiative that we've labeled strategic change. It's an effort by the director to position USGS for the future and try to build the organization that we want to be for the 21st century, and there are three elements of this strategic change have that a big impact on how we're approaching information technology and information management in the survey, and the first of those is we are bringing a regional focus to the Survey. Prior to strategic change, USGS was not -- has a big field presence, we have about 400 offices across the country, but we didn't have an organization infrastructure with a regional dimension to support and that the director is pushing for more support into the field. He's also -- our director, Chip Grode has an emphasis on science, bringing together the fabulous work we do in the disciplines and bring an integrated science to the that we deliver to our users. And lastly, the focus of strategic change is to start to look at USGS as -- a science and information agency, and I think that has a big opportunity for those of us who are working in the information area in USGS. Now, let me talk a little about the GIO, or the geographic information office. As Hord said, that is a bit of a tongue twister. In addition to that, it's often a little bit difficult to explain and I've been asked quite often what is an GIO and why not just a CIO. In USGS we like to think of the GIO as a CIO-plus. We see our responsibilities following out of the Clinger-Cohen act and are working to establish the same kind of policy infrastructure you have here in BLM for information technology and IRM planning. In addition, the leadership of USGS wanted to provide some focus on the information, the content, the information resources within the Bureau. It's been estimated that we probably have about a $20 billion investment in data, and so as we created the GIO position, we felt it was important to bring a focus to that resource as well. And lastly, the GIO has -- will have some responsibility in the area that we call information services, and that includes things such as our libraries, our publications and our information centers, earth science information center is really the storefront of USGS. That's a little about what the GIO is. Some of the things we have been working on over the last few months are similar in a way to the kinds of things that are being done here in BLM. We do not have the history that you have with your CIO and with your information technology investment board, and we're really looking to BLM as a model as we create that kind of capacity in the Survey. So we're building an office, helping to -- thinking through the policy infrastructure we would like to have in place for the Survey. In addition to that, we are working on three rather large initiatives that are more data oriented or content related, and the first of those is an effort toward an Enterprise GIS, and I was delighted to hear director Hatfield mentioning that as a priority for BLM as well. I've had numerous meetings with Hord Tipton as I have come into USGS to talk about ways we might work on Enterprise GIS together and perhaps provide some departmental leadership in that area. So that's an activity that I am quite excited about and share the director's enthusiasm. We're also in USGS working on an initiative called gateway to the earth, which is a portal like project, an attempt to bring together the information from our disciplines and our regions in a more coherent and logical, integrated form and to be able to make that available to the public in ways that are meaning full to them and to help bring decision-support tools to the data that USGS manages. Lastly, another initiative that we're working on is the national spatial data information. This is not solely a USGS thing. It's across -- it's a cross-agency initiative and involves state and local government and the private sector as well. As many of you know, the NSDI is over-- overseen by the Federal geographic data committee, which is -- the oversight of that committee is delegated to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and has been further housed in U.S. Geological Survey. The Secretariat is staffed there, and that FGDC staff has been moved into the geographic

information office and I think bringing a new level of focus to the NSDI and again we are quite excited about the opportunities there. But one of the things I'm most thrilled about is the opportunity, and I mean this sincerely, to work with BLM. I think they're just fabulous in numerous ways that we might work together to do the kinds of things that our users expect. And as I started to list those things, it occurred to me that in the short run this partnership might involve more taking on the behalf of USGS and hopefully over the long run we will be able to share on the giving side as well. But we really do see opportunities to try to mirror the work that you're doing with a unified information architecture and see that as a way to sort of build a capability in USGS and that will enable our interoperability between the two bureaus in the long run and hopefully provide some leadership to the department as well. We also are very impressed with the work you are doing in project management, in your project management training, I.T. project management training and we would sort of like to tailgate on that initiative and look to bring that same kind of capability into USGS to develop a cadre of expertise within the survey. As I mentioned before, we would like to work with you hand in hand as we go forward with enterprise GIS. We also have talked, Hord and I, quite frequently about some opportunities for creating what we are starting to call a collaboratory, where we would bring technology and tools and create an environment for sharing our data and our information in a sort of a storefront setting. And lastly, I think some of the things that Bob mentioned earlier in the way of E-government I believe are fabulous opportunities for us to work together in this whole goal to have a citizencentric government and to have sort of seamless interface to the public and I think that those kinds of goals could really be the -- begun with strong partnerships between USGS and BLM. And we'll look forward to working with you along those lines. Once again, I'm very happy to be here at BLM and look forward to working with you over the long run.

H. Tipton: Thanks so much, Karen. And thanks particularly for those acknowledgements and very complementary statements. I am glad now we invited you to sit on this panel. So many opportunities, so many things to do, and so little time, and pressure to get that done. Well, now back to Washington D.C. for the wrap-up opening remarks of the day. Mr. Henri Bisson, Assistant Director for Renewable Resources and Planning, just fresh back from a vacation and ready to go, Henri?

H. Bisson: Well, I think it was the typical vacation. You get really tired and come back to work to freshen up. It's the other way around. Tip, I appreciate the opportunity to be with you all today. First of all, I guess what I intend to do this morning is to highlight some of the activities that are occurring in the Renewable Resources and Planning directorate. I wish Pete Culp would have been able to be here today, because there is an awful lot of work going on in his directorate, in minerals and lands, that would be of interest to the group. In fact, there's as much going on there as there is anywhere in the Bureau. Let me begin by saying that I view the Bureau architecture effort as an iterative process and it's going to change the way we do business as we make smarter investments in I.T. that are aligned with the business of the Bureau. Right now, and someone can correct me if they have a better figure, I believe we spend well over $100 million a year on IRM, data management throughout the Bureau. Karen a few minutes ago talked about the fact that USGS estimates that they have an investment of $20 billion in their data and I guess I would defy anybody to be able to come up with an estimate how much money the Bureau has in its data investments. We just don't know because the data is all over the place, and we've never

really made an effort, I don't believe, to tabulate it. We know about what we're spending, but we really don't know how much we have. So hopefully we will be able to pull those estimates together. Within our directorate we are actively engaged in the architecture effort at a number of levels. Members of my staff are participating in meetings and advising the Bureau architecture core team, Pat Greene, senior GI -- I am also the sponsor for GIS within the Bureau, and through Jim Turner, who is our project manager, we're working on the development and implementation of an Enterprise GIS system. In the area of business process analysis, we have several subject matter project teams, expert teams, being led by 8200 staff. One team is working on the land use process to basically describe what that process is from a business standpoint and then to look at whether or not we can change that process and make it more efficient. There is another team that's also working on assessing condition of the public lands. That team has been active in the last month-and-a-half or so. We also intend to participate on other process analysis teams that will be addressing compliance and monitoring. In the area of data management, again, AD200 is sponsoring the planning management effort which is being led by Gary Stuckey. That team already prepared one document which will be coming out shortly entitled data management tools for land use planning and that should be distributed very soon. Other documents are expected to follow which will address Data Standards and metadata. AD200 program leads are assuming the role as data stewards and are working to implement Data Standards for their programs. Particularly I would like to highlight what the cultural heritage staff has been doing. They've been involved in building an infrastructure to support extensive data sharing effort with state historic preservation officers. I don't think any other program has been effective in first of all developing national data standards and then working with external organizations to ensure that the data can be used by everybody, not just by BLM. We're working on various applications within our program areas, RAZ, which is tied to the range program, and RMS, which is tied to the recreation program. Those systems are currently under development. A review is under way of other related projects in the clearing house to determine if they're still relevant to accomplishing the Bureau's mission, and we have a team that's working on developing a common look and feel for all of our land use planning websites across the Bureau. We're also developing documentation for approval before the ITIB -- projects we have proposed, including IT support for land use planning, GIS transition and the enterprise GI and we're working with AD500 to clarify a number of issues as related to relicensing. We are concerned that with all of the work we have going that there's going to be a huge training need within the Bureau, and so we're looking at developing training specifically for implementation of the Data Management Plan, for GIS enhancements that may come about and for geospatial data. We are all in this together, I.T professionals and GIS community have to work in concert to achieve the vision articulated by the Bureau architecture. As we transition to an Enterprise GIS, we need to design, build and maintain the infrastructure that we need to provide integrated GIS functionality toward business processes. This is going to require close involvement of the I.T. community in future GIS implementation efforts and is going to force us to work at an even higher level of coordination with the GIS support personnel and knowledge workers. Thanks, Tip.

H. Tipton: Thank you, Henri. You certainly seem to have a lot on your plate as well. It really is encouraging when we look at our attendance and we hear the positions and issues that are coming on from the State Directors and the Assistant Directors and our partnering agencies and we see that business really and truly is starting to drive the I.T. process, and that's sort of been the

theme of our conference this week on the ITIB. About 25% of our participants are from the business side of the house of this conference and it's just important that the conference be recognized as a major step towards integrating these two things. We hope not to be hoisting any more programs over the brick wall down to New Mexico to make these things work. Well, we've had some great comments and we have a number of questions that are in at this point. I think it would probably be a good idea to make sure that everyone's questions -- at least we answer as many of these questions as we can, that we take a couple questions before the break on this. We have one good question and I'm kind of interested in the answer myself on this, and this is from Allen, I'm not sure where Allen is from, but it involves energy conservation, and it says: We have been told previously not to -- not to power down the networked PCs. Secretary Norton's memo tells us to turn off PCs when idle and save power whenever possible. So what is the current correct method for management of PC power? We're going to pass that over to Mr. Piet deWitt, our Assistant Secretary and see what Piet has to say about that.

P. deWitt: Thank you, tip. I was present when Secretary Norton made her initial statement to the Assistant Secretaries about her desires to conserve energy in the department. I can tell you that she is very serious about this effort. Now, there are many options available to each one of us in the department to reduce our energy consumption, and her memorandum that she sent out this week identifies a few of those. I know that it includes the passage on computers. Consider the fact that when Secretary Norton walks down a hallway in the interior department, she may pass a dozen empty offices that are fully lit and have computers running. This in her mind is a waste of energy and I can understand her feelings. However, I believe that the Secretary would not want to unnecessarily jeopardize major computer systems by having them shut down as a routine matter. So I think it's up to the Bureaus to look at what their activities and what activities require the most energy and array them in a manner that can make significant reductions. The last time I spoke with the Secretary, she was discussing having a quantitative mesh. I don't know whether she is really -- she has put that out yet in terms of a number, but I would assume that she would be glad to give the Bureaus the flexibility to address that quota as best they can.

H. Tipton: Thanks, Piet. That's been a question I've heard several times. We will probably have some direction after working with the department on that very soon. We also have a question in on insights on emerging technologies. Basically: How do you see these changing the way we do business? Fortunately, that sort of leads into something that I was kind of anxious to talk about anyway, and that's another thing that we're discussing along with many of the participants this week and what we among other things called our office of the future, and we have a number of people outside the tech world as well as within the techy world trying to envision what we are going to look like a few years down the road. So I am going to take the liberty as the moderator of sort of answering that question myself, and merely mention that with the declining resources and fewer dollars and Michelle mentioned this, we have to find ways through technology, I think, as a serious option in getting more done with the people that we have and hopefully with the dollars that we can maintain. I have with me today an instrument that is sort of an example of the techy world, if you will, that typifies not just a personal digital assistant at this point, but is actually a working field tool in the event that we have several states that in what I call the current office that are out testing devices like this and other means for -- means from computers in collecting data. This data then is collected digitally, and it's much

easier to store, makes it much easier to be accessible, and I think it becomes obvious that once data is collected in any manner other than the form and the paper and the pencil that it's going to be a big advantage to us and we can see how it will be better quality and -- so we have -- we have several presentations this week on the different types of technologies that are out there. One of our major ongoing Bureau program initiatives now is working through the many of the principles with USGS, the Forest Service and a wonderful program they're calling the -- "from field to fabric," which takes so much of our land data and will eventually have that spatially displayed across the country. So we have some major investments in that. A number of our offices are piloting a number of these very innovative techniques on their own and I see current office and the office of the future as collecting these emerging technologies, piloting and testing those through the new procedures and things that we have, and making the best decisions for the Bureau on that. So it's really very encouraging. It's an exciting time for us to be working on things like this.

M. Chavez: Tip, are you saying if I take this piece of equipment here I can plug in a downlink to a satellite, get my GPS position, I can read my e-mail, I can check on calendars and see where everybody is in the office and get messages and all of that?

H. Tipton: See, I knew when I showed that everyone would want one, and that's one of the problems with technology. There are so many tools out there that are changing so quickly, we have to be really careful about the decisions that we make because you can have some money invested real quickly in devices that are great devices, but they might not be the devices of choice across the board. And, Michelle is right, it's amazing what tools like this can do that. You are correct. This little device can do the global positioning system, the GPS. There is also an attachment for a digital camera for this little unit that you can not only take the picture of the spotted owl nest, you can have the coordinates, you can have the time and you can pinpoint precisely where that is. And your digital picture can be stored in a data bank of your choice, and it can be accessible across the board.

M. Chavez: So what you're saying is we need to be careful not to just focus on the toys, but to make sure that the equipment that we're buying, in fact, can help us to do our job more efficiently and this may be one in some instances and it may be just a more fun thing to have in your pocket for others.

H. Tipton: That's an excellent point. The initial cost on devices like this oftentime is just the beginning, and we in the I.T. world recognize that we have to support these from a service level, and we want to make sure that we have the right tool, and it has a broad applicability and fits across the board. So we are excited about changing things, and the business is really helping used to this, and I will simply point that in terms of proposals through the new system, the board that we have has gone from one at our last meeting to 14 at this point. So I think our business, our ground people, are learning the process and the system, and they're making it work. So we're looking forward to an exciting board meeting next week along with that. Well, as we approach our break time, I want to remind everyone to remember after we come back we're going to be ready to hear from you. So be ready to call or fax in additional questions using the numbers provided on your screen, and you can direct your questions to a particular panel member, if you

like. So this is a very techy event for us. We're going to be tuned into the Washington Room when we get back, and this is just amazing the things that we can do down here. So stay tuned. We'll be back in 15 minutes, and we will be playing some hardball!

H. Tipton: Hello. Welcome back to The Big Picture coming to you live from the 2001 IRM Seminar. Again, I'd like to welcome back our panelists, both in Phoenix and Washington D.C. Now that we've heard from everyone on the panel, we'd like to hear from our most important participants, and that would be you. We've set aside the next hour to hear your comments and to try to answer your questions. Now, helping us today we have two veteran I.T. people who will be taking questions from the conference floor where they are watching our telecast along with you in the field. First I would like to introduce Marietta Allen, an IRM budget analyst from the Washington Office. Hello, Marietta.

M. Allen: Good morning. We truly appreciate the comments and discussion that has taken place to this point and we look forward to bringing our audience in on the questions and answers as part of this discussion. Thank you.

H. Tipton: Thank you, Marietta. On the other side of the room we have the infamous Chris North, the BLM Arizona state chief information officer, who didn't have to travel very far today. Welcome, Chris.

C. North: Thanks, tip. We are glad to be here. This crowd is fired up and we're going to have some good questions for you this morning.

H. Tipton: It sounds like you all are having a lot of fun up there. Ok. We have some questions. I am going to start with a fax question that came in before we go back to the Washington Room. This question is from Rich Rott and it's -- it's two questions. It's directed to Bob Doyle in the Washington Office. Bob, I will give you the first part of this question, but I think Henri may have to help you out a little bit on this. The question is: When recreation permits are issued online, first of all, who checks the EA, which is the environmental analysis for compliance? Then secondly -- the second question is some events where permits are requested for a music event are actually rave parties! Who screens them?!

B. Doyle: Those are good questions, Tip. Our folk has been on the -- our focus has been on the business side of things on how to make that happen. There are certainly some technical program questions and the oversight and review that's implied in this, in this question and I think Henri is more appropriate person to answer those things, but I want to make it clear that on this particular demonstration project, there's still a number of mechanical things to work out. We think the concept is sound. We still have to clear through things like this, and it will be a pilot. So those kinds of questions are the things we want to look at as we try to deliver services in a more efficient way to the public. But in terms of the technical program aspects of this, I think you're right, I think Henri probably can weigh in on that.

H. Bisson: Let me jump in for a second. First of all, I can't imagine that we would be issuing permits for rave parties over the net. Even though that's predominantly where they're advertised

and that's how our law enforcement people find about them is because they're advertised on the net, you know, there are certain types of activities, recreation permits, that are appropriate to issue permits over the net for, such as camping permits, some sort of special use permits where you've got a lot of people asking for those kinds of opportunities. We're always going to have to do necessary environmental assessment work and compliance for -- particularly for large groups and for events such as a rave, which I don't believe we authorize very many of. So I just think it's the permits, we need to decide which ones we will be able to do on the net, but we'll still -- there may be a way to work out an application process that would have to be submitted and then taken through the normal work process and then perhaps some sort of electronic response could be worked out to issue the permit and allow them to pay, but I think mostly what we're talking about are things like campground permits, maybe some OHV permits.

Dir. Hatfield: Although, Henri, as you know and tip, I know you know, with AFMS we are trying to do an application interaction with the permitees and obviously they would be providing information to us and as Henri says, we would have to do to the environmental analysis with that with the GLO we have government land office records in our care that we now have given millions of people the opportunity to access and so the real advantage to us is just that it makes it easier to process whatever the business is, and so we can do that both from taking care of the business side and the transaction of the money and also taking care of the environmental side but the key is trying to get into that interaction directly with our customers and making a much more efficient process.

H. Bisson: A good analogy would be something like Travelocity and other businesses where you go online and fill out a application or go through a menu of things you want and what they do is they send you an acknowledgment that they got your request or that they'll follow it up with an e-mail confirming that your activity is approved. So some variation of that I am sure we could work out, not just for recreation but for other business practices as well.

B. Doyle: The other advantage in terms of the automated system is that you now have management information. If you begin to see that you get a large number of requests for a particular activity, then you begin to ask yourself some questions, what's going on, and if it is a rave party or whatever, it gives you the opportunity to further examine, whereas if people came in individually you might not recognize what building here and what's going on.

H. Bisson: You know, setting something up electronically, I would assume that whatever permits we issue, as an example in recreation, it would already have the appropriate NEPA work completed and you would say we are, say, going to issue 100 permits to do this particular activity, and when you got over 100 permits, the system would tell you that you've exceeded your threshold, or at least you would be able to monitor where you are relative to that threshold and either cut it off or modify your analysis to address the greater use that's occurring. And in contrast where you've got sort of individual events, you would take the application and go through the NEPA process and then make the decision to proceed or not.

H. Tipton: I think what this teaches us is as we move into -- further into the electronic age that there are more and more details and technical issues that just have to be confronted and worked

out as we go, but I see -- Henri, maybe you have some thoughts on this -- that the real driving force is that the public really wants to do business electronically. They want to interact with the technology that they have available to them. And they want their government to have technology equally as good as what they have at home.

H. Bisson: On the personal level, I agree with you completely. I would much rather make airline reservations and purchase a ticket for personal travel by going to a website than to go down and deal with a travel agent and you could even buy a car over the web now without having to go deal with car salesmen. Who wants to deal with car salesmen? We basically cut them out of the process, which is terrific.

H. Tipton: Let me know when that next rave party is coming up, Henri. Let's move on to another question. We have a question from Dennis Leonard, and Henri, this question is directed to you, and I'll try to interpret this. It says: With the constantly upgrading software in GIS and the expectation that resource specialists will use it, how do you see the resource specialists at the Field Office level being able to do their job as a forester? For example, and also do the GIS? And keep up?

H. Bisson: That's a terrific question. I mean, right now when you talk with the GIS people themselves, every time a new piece of software or a new iteration of the software comes out people get excited because these are tools they have not had at their hands before that makes their jobs a lot easier and I think it's going to take a real concerted effort for -- for our technical specialists to keep people updated and informed and the Bureau is going to have to make decisions from a Bureauwide standpoint about which of these processes we're going to buy into. I mean, we can't buy everything that's coming out, particularly when it's six months later it's superseded by something new. I think we're going to have to make some conscious decisions about which tools to make available to our folks and attempt to manage how much money we are spending in that process.

Dir. Hatfield: That's one of the nice things about having the information technology board, because there on the board you have representatives from the Washington Office and AD's as well as State Directors and Field Managers, so we a good cross section of people across the Bureau having impact on that decision.

H. Bisson: I think what the ITIB has focussed on, at least so far, have been the investments in terms of new systems, and I think that when we start looking at available technology and system upgrades, we're going to have to -- I think that's an area where we need work, Nina. I think it's an area we have not focused as much attention on, and it's a huge area of potential investment.

H. Tipton: Michelle, I believe you had a thought?

M. Chavez: Well, when I hear a question like that one, I think about way back when I first started with the Federal government and we were still using stencil-type material to make our copies, and we had to use carbons to make duplicates of our word processing documents and then we went to Wangs and a few of us started to pick up more keyboarding skills and look at us

today, those same resource specialists who 15 years ago maybe wouldn't have considered doing their own word processing do it as a natural part of their job, and I think we need to recognize that, yes, we are going to be asking for staffs to build up new skills -- our staffs to build up new skills, but just looking from the past, I think we're up to it and I think it's going to become much more of a natural part of our doing our jobs.

H. Tipton: I agree. I think there's probably a training issue that goes along with this. I believe we have a question from the floor on the Washington Room?

M. Allen: We do have a question. This is Georgia from the Oregon State Office. Georgia, your question?

Well, I know that we use a lot of GIS data from USGS in doing our GIS in Oregon, and I would like to talk with the -- care un and possibly Piet about what they see as opportunities for us to work together with other sister agencies, USGS in particular, to further our goals and to advance our technology.

H. Tipton: Karen?

K. Siderelis: Well, as I said earlier, I have just a great deal of enthusiasm about the two Bureaus working together toward enterprise GIS and I think we each bring some things to the table, and obviously the USGS data is one thing that would be the benefit of BLM, I believe. But I think there are bigger benefits if we think about how we sort of approach this as an enterprise, as opposed to just trying to put USGS out in the hands of numerous entities in the field, and I think we can do more focused enterprise Bureauwide planning, we can do more focused evaluation of products and so forth. So, as I look at trying to look across the USGS and the disciplines in the regions there, it only sort of begs the question, why not look across two bureaus with similar interests, similar users and similar capabilities to work on these things together. I recognize there are some obstacles there. Some of those related to pricing policies and so forth, but I think we've got a lot of momentum in both agencies -- or in both bureaus and that we perhaps could walk away from this session pledging to work together on working on an enterprise approach to GIS for both of us. Piet, you may want to add to that.

P. deWitt: As I mentioned, the Secretary has said we need do to more with less and in many cases partnerships allow us to use our dollars in joint concert with other agencies and we both get something out of it and any time that happens, we're for it.

H. Tipton: That's for sure. That's for sure. I understand that Chris North has another question on the floor.

C. North: We do. Thanks, tip. Jan from the New Mexico state office. Your question?

This question is for Tip and Bob. With the changing administration I think it would be beneficial for this group to hear how you see we can posture ourself to continue to enhance our I.T. budget in the coming years.

H. Tipton: I will defer to Bob for the first shot on that since he seems to control most of that budget.

B. Doyle: Jan, we're trying to do a number of things on the budget front, but first let me start by saying we have already met with a number of officials in the department. We've talked to some of the designees, and they've been favorably impressed with some of the things we have been doing here in the Bureau to try to manage by performance, and I think one of the first things that we can do to demonstrate to them is that we can succeed in things that we plan on doing. We need to do that on the program side, but also we need to demonstrate that we're good stewards of the financial resources that they have entrusted to us. So, we need to continue to educate them on that, but we also need to do some things on the budget front and I wanted to talk about some things that we're looking at to try to get a better handle on funding for I.T. and try to make a better case in the budget process to get some more resources. Number one, hen tree talked earlier about the amount of money we were spending on I.T. and he hesitated because the reality is we really don't know how much we have been spending on I.T. We have estimates from $85 to $155 million. So one of the things we tried to do this year was to set up a team to begin to look at that and try to collect some information on what are our expenditures on I.T., what are we investing in I.T.? So we have a team looking at that and hopefully within the next month they will be coming back to us with the results of their efforts. In addition, we've been discussing with the budget strategy team and with the ITIB investment board the possibility of establishing a cap on I.T. investments. Once we have a better idea of the scope and magnitude of our investments, what we want to do is be able to manage those resources within the contexts of the Bureau's overall budget and we want to be able to focus our investment and we want to be able to prioritize where we're spending our money. We want to be able to demonstrate to the department that we do have a management control over the IRM resources and how we go about allocating our resources and where we plan to invest our money so that we can get the best return on the dollars. The third thing we're trying to do and we will do this year, is that is synchronize the investment activity in I.T. with the budget process. In the past years, it seems that we've been out of sync in terms of our planning and justifications for I.T. activities and the budget cycle. So what we're doing this year is synchronizing and coordinating the plans and activities of the investment board to make sure that once we make a decision on what investment is best for the Bureau that we then incorporate that into the budget process so that for 2003, in this particular case, we can get the necessary resources to do what we think needs to be done here in the Bureau. Now, all of that requires us to do a better job of advance planning, better job of understanding what our data requirements are and what our system requirements and to pull that all together so that we can make a coherent, comprehensive presentation for our investment needs.

H. Tipton: Thanks very much, Bob. I guess I would add to that a couple of major objectives that I've had to try to enhance our budget position sort of lead back to establishing credibility, increased credibility, with our field programs, with the State Directors, with -- and the Assistant Directors on just how we deliver or how we work with their business people and their resource people in terms of integrating I.T. with those actual programs. I think once we get their support, then Henri won't be so tight with his money when it comes time to try to work some integration with the recreation or the range programs. And the other thing is to just demonstrate sound

management of information technology in our IRM resources. As all of you have known, we've been scrutinized very closely by the general accounting office over, I guess, probable eat last five to ten years and I have typified it as being in GAO jail and we have had some major success in the recent month in getting acknowledged from GAO that we have made enough progress that they've let us out of GAO jail, but at the same time warning us they are still looking over our shoulder. But that was a major landmark for us, and as we achieve higher certification of our management ability of I.T., I can't help but believe that that will put us in a much better position when we move back into the budget cycle and ask for sponsorship and endorsement and dollars for our projects. I understand we have a question from Marietta up in the Washington Room.

C. North: Tip, this is Henri. I just wanted to break in for a second if I could. One of the things that I'm concerned about as an A D-Back here in the programs that I am responsible for is when you start talking upwards of $155 million of money that's being spent in the I.T. arena, you know, much of that money is coming out of the programs. It's not pure IRM money, and when we go to the hill and justify program increases, we say we're going to do additional work, and I don't know what the right number is. There's no question that a large percentage of the work that we do has to include investment in information technology, but we have an obligation to ensure that that money is being spent to accomplish the work, and so whatever percentage of the program money gets spent in support of these initiatives has got to produce something for us, and we need to make sure that money is being spent well.

H. Tipton: One way of measuring that, Henri, and I'm glad you brought that point up, is our test for successful information technology investment is the rate of return that we gauge and monitor and measure on that. So we hope to convince Henri and Piet and the program folks that if they spend a dollar on I.T. to improve the planning process that they will get -- at least $2 in return value on that, and that may mean that they have additional hours to do planning, but it would actually translate more back down to getting that work done. So we have to characterize I.T. as a positive and every investment has to meet that test. So we understand where you're coming from, Henri, and we will continue to work with you on that.

M. Chavez: I think one last comment on that is the bottom line is customer service. Customer service internally and customer service with our external customers. If we can demonstrate that that investment is providing better customer service, then we're well on our way to justifying it.

H. Tipton: Excellent. Marietta, now I believe we will go to you with a question on the floor.

M. Allen: This is a question for anyone on our panel. We have Dave from the Oklahoma state office, Moore, Oklahoma. Dave, your question?

It's the Oklahoma Field Office.

M. Allen: Sorry.

That's all right. One of the first speakers we heard here talked about data quality and what I would like to know is how can we convince middle and lower level managers who don't feel that

it's worth wasting their time on of the importance of data quality in ensuring that what we put into these systems is worth the money we're spendING to put it -- money we are spending to put it in.

H. Tipton: Good question. And with our data doubling every eight months, we need to know what to do with it. So, Henri, you are sort of our lead on the data. What can you tell us about that?

H. Bisson: Well, obviously you put garbage in, you get garbage out. I think we have to be absolutely concerned about the quality of our data and it doesn't matter whether it's things like mailing addresses, which cost us, if we mail items out to people to the wrong address, they get returned to us or they don't get notices on time from a business standpoint that costs us just as much as using poor quality data to make faulty decisions. If we rely on data and the data is of such a standard that we can't make good decisions, then it really has no value to us. So I think it's important that managers understand the quality of the information that they're basing their decisions on and that we seek to improve that quality, either by finding other sources of better data or by prudently deciding which data we absolutely have to have to make good decisions and then going after it.

Dir. Hatfield: And moreover, hen re, the way we are managing data now is what's costing us so much money. When we have so many systems have that the same piece of data but they're entered differently, just like the name and address, something as simple as that, when we have six or seven different ways of doing that, that's what's costing us money in terms of operating and maintaining our systems. So having Data Standards and adhering those -- add hearing to those data -- adhering to those standards is important not only in the kinds of decisions we may but it's also one of the ways we can move money back into the program work by making the operation and maintenance costs so much less. It's a key issue for us on a number of fronts.

H. Tipton: Thanks. That's a very good question. Come in, Chris. I believe we have a question from Chris North's side.

C. North: We're here. Somebody that I really look up to, Rick Dickman.

H. Tipton: I like that shirt, Rick.

C. North: Rick is from the Montana state office. He has a question for you.

This question is for Tip. I really enjoyed your analogy yesterday about existing applications, the bus rolling down the road at about 45 miles an hour with the flat tire, and I represent users of the land and mineral customers through the change management board for the LR2000. I want to tell you they are very excited about new technologies, could be expanded report capability, ad hoc reporting through Bureau, through the -- and it could also be expanded reporting capability later on, spatial reporting possibly through NILS as a project. Their concern, though, is that we can leverage these new technologies in a way that doesn't leave our customer base behind, you know, that they are going to receive the training, that they're going to be able to use these new

technologies without being a computer scientist or without being, let's say, a GIS specialist, as an example. Thank you.

H. Tipton: That's a very long comment and question, Rick. You've hit on what I see as the most difficult issue that we have in developing an architecture and then implementing that architecture. Moving from the as is to the target or the future of where we want to be is difficult because we are not allowed to stop operations or to stop business while we perfect the architecture. This is a very debated subject because those folks who are particularly passionate about developing a very pure architecture, and the GAO has this view to an extent as well, are concerned when we continue to develop systems such as NILS or other ongoing projects that we had already started and are not making that close connection with the architecture. But my view of that is, the way that we change the tire is not only to continue working in fulling -- fulfilling the architecture and the Zackman diagrams and all the other thing we have, but to take the architecture we have put in place, the initial, and then work from those business applications that are advanced to the point that we're comfortable that they are fitting with our architecture, they're working through the various systems and the screens and the board and they're basically sanctioned to work in concert and in a sense develop a significant portion of that architectural while they're going. Both the systems and the architecture are dynamic operations. We don't just build these things and put them on the shelf and re expect them to be static. They constantly need feed and care to keep them current, especially in the technology end of the world. So I believe it is possible to do that transition. It may be painful in many cases, but that's the course we've chosen to take on this. So we're not abandoning the architecture for sure, but we're trying to build it for both ways and make sure when we drill down from the top and burrow up from the bottom that the two meet. LR2000 is a good example of a system that has been modernized, it was Y2KKed and a lot of folks participated and I think knew are getting the benefits from good reporting, better interaction. That's a good example of advancement and how technology has helped us and saved us some money, by the way. So thanks for the question. I hope my long answer got to the point, Rick.

I think it did. Thanks, Tip.

H. Tipton: I want to go now to a telefax question, and this is from Allen of Tulsa, and let's see. This could be either Nina or Bob. It involves not only telecommuting but tele computing. So you folks may want to answer half and we will fill in the gaps. The question is: With the telecommuting requirement coming from Congress, will we be able to have broadband access, lots of programs do not work timely at the 56K modems. Nina, would you like to start?

Dir. Hatfield: I'm going to ask Bob to respond to the bulk of it, but, Tip, we have a question for you back here on the east coast. We're wondering when our lunch is going to get here. But obviously this administration has a lot of interest in us trying to economize in terms of office space and people's time and actually we have a Federal law that we have to implement in terms of emphasizing telecommuting where it makes sense for our business and so we are looking at how that we can make that work in the most efficient fashion. So Bob actually has been working on a pilot. We have a couple pilots that have been going on in the Bureau over the last couple years and Bob has one that's been going on here in headquarters, and through that pilot we're

trying to look at questions like what kind of equipment we need to handle and the issue of the broadband, the kinds of Pathways that we would need to make sure that the information can go back and forth from wherever the telecommuter is to the business place. So there are issues that we're still looking at, but we are looking toward trying to make sure that we can meet the mandate of this new statute. Bob, you want to respond about the pilot specifically?

B. Doyle: This was an issue that came up in our pilot and my view is that the job and the needs of the job drive how it is that we equip the person to do the job. If the person deals with the -- if the individual deals with a lot of data and has to download a lot of data and obviously a dial-up is impractical for doing that, I think we need to support them like we would anywhere else. In fact, in our pilot we do have an individual who's participating that does have a need to work with a great deal of data and we have made arrangements for them to have a DSL line at the government's expense so that they can continue to do the work that they need to do. So I think it's situational. I think what kind of equipment and what kind of services individuals have, I think the manager is going to have to make that call, at least certainly that's been our experience in the pilot. We need to continue to monitor the pilot and look at -- talk with other agencies and see what their experience is. But I think if we allow the work to drive what it is that we need to do and how we need to support somebody in their effort, I think that will lead us to a logical conclusion.

H. Tipton: Michelle, do you have any experiences with telecommuting in New Mexico?

M. Chavez: We've had a couple requests from employees on telecommuting and we've had some temporary situations where for a temporary reason, health reason or something, child care or something like that, where we've had to accommodate folks. We haven't had to go to the degree of fully equipping employees in the home, but certainly I think that folks are watching that closely to see when that next phase may come in. It's interesting, because I just read last night, I think it was a "Washington Post" article, some more nuances of telecommuting that we need to keep in mind and that has to do with health and safety of the work environment and the expectation that even though when employees are working at home, we still are responsible for them being in a safe working environment, and how we address those kinds of issues are also going to play into just how we move towards telecommuting. I think the key is, as Bob said, we have to stay focussed on whether this is good for the business.

H. Tipton: Allen, I sure hope that your DSL broadband connections work bet inner Tulsa than they do in Washington D.C. Mine seems to be down more often than it's up. This is a real hot issue right now, and that's -- it's a very good thing for debate and discussion, I am sure we will see more on this soon. Marietta, I understand you have another question from the floor?

M. Allen: Yes, thanks question for Bob Doyle. This is Steve from the Arizona State Office.

Yes, Bob, Arizona has had as a fee demo project for the recreation permit in Parilla Canyon where we use e-commerce and we go on line and the public receives their permit and the transaction is taken care of. We have another wilderness area which is coming on, and we're trying to work with CBS to make sure that it is funded through them. Is CBS prepared to take

e-commerce? And the next question is, where is the e-commerce effort in the Bureau going?

B. Doyle: In terms of the specific project that you talked about, the short answer is yes, we are prepared to take it on. In fact, I think what we're talking about right now is one of the challenges that Tip has had as the CIO in trying to get our arms around all the different initiatives that are going on. I think these are well intended things, you know, makes a lot of sense with what you're trying to do there in Arizona and what Oregon is doing, but what we need to do as a Bureau is to make sure that we all share this information and we can all take advantage of what's already been done. As a side note, the reason why we got involved from the business standpoint is that the way some of the offices have gone about trying to be responsive to citizens' requests and to take care of technology has caused us to do transactions outside of the financial system and we need to be very careful that as we do transactions and we take in revenue from the public that it all gets recorded properly, and that's why we're trying to run it through CBS, and I think we've found ways to do that, and I'm pretty sure that Terry had indicated to me that he was aware, who is the project manager for CBS, is aware of some activities going on in Arizona and hopefully he'll be able to work with you on making sure that the process that you all are following down there comports to what it is we need to be doing from an architecture standpoint as well as from a financial standpoint. In terms of E government, as I was trying to say, I think more and more the government is going to be getting into the transaction side of how we do business, how do we deliver products and services to the citizens and it's going to go beyond the information that we are sharing right now, and actually get into the transactional side of things. So I think this administration made it very clear, some of you may have heard some of the management reforms that OMB has talked about. They've asked that the agencies to focus on five specific areas of management reform, and one of them has to do with E-government and the -- they're challenging the agencies to use technologies to bring government closer to the citizens and to allow them to open up the decision making process and allow them to participate in it. So I see us more and more developing initiatives and developing projects that demonstrate the use of technology and the invitation to better serve the public.

H. Tipton: That's great. I believe we have a question coming in from Chris North.

C. North: We do. I have REG from the Nevada state office. He had a pad of questions. I had him pick his favorite one out.

H. Tipton: Good morning. How are you doing?

I actually have quite a few questions, but I'll focus on one of them right now. The USGS has been posturing itself as kind of the warehouse for remote sensing data within the department, and particular satellite imagery. I think it would be useful in landscape monitoring to use this imagery on a weekly, daily basis even, but it's very expensive. So I'm wondering what kind of collaborative efforts are going on to look at this kind of information exchange between Field Offices and maybe Sioux Falls facility where the data center is.

H. Tipton: That's very timely question. Care un and I in fact have been talking about that over our last couple of meetings and Karen, would you like to address that?

K. Siderelis: Yes, certainly. I guess just to echo what Tip said in general, we have had numerous discussions about how USGS and BLM might cooperate more closely in data sharing and hopefully to overcome some of the pricing obstacles that we have, and I think there is a commitment on both our parts to pursue this and to try to get into a more mutually beneficial relationship and that's one of the goals I have as the incoming GIO. With respect to the land remote sensing data in particular, that is a mission of USGS to manage the national land remote sensing data archive in Sioux Falls and to provide that information to the public, and apparently the legislation does require that that's done on a reimbursable basis. We have an advisory committee that includes representatives from government and the private sector and state and local government as well to help advise the archive and this whole area of competing with the private sector is -- raises its head from time to time as well as some of the legislative requirements. That being said, I still think we find the same thing true within USGS that you're saying happens in BLM, this incredible information asset for the nation is not untapped but certainly not tapped to the extent that's possible and I think our own scientists find the same situation. So we're working to alleviate those problems in an aggressive and as rapid a way as possible. The only other thing I might say along those lines is that the archive program at Sioux Falls is undertaking -- is putting together a data grant program where they will be providing data through competitive process to organizations that might want to look back in time, so go back to the beginning of -- use multi-temporal data from the archive to get at some of the landscape issues that were mentioned. So while we don't have the answer today, I think we're on the path of trying to solve this dilemma for a number of potential users of the satellite data. Thank you.

H. Tipton: Remote sensing satellite data, the photography, all are technologies that we're exploring in various places to see how applicable they can be to integrate with many of our traditional land inspection and monitoring processes. We hear so much this data is now free from defense and all that, but sometimes it's just -- it's free but there's still a cost to it somehow or another. So that's the type of thing that care un and I are going to be talking and working on so that we can trade out data that we may obtain from companies that they may not otherwise have information on, and yet figure out how to lower our costs and accessibility of the data for our folks in the field.

K. Siderelis: I might just add one other thing there, Tip. With the new administration coming in, it's quite clear that they're expecting USGS to provide renewed focus on supporting department of interior, and that's in science and information areas, and so I think that we've got incentive there to begin to work together and sort of -- in sort of new and different ways.

H. Tipton: Well, it's about time, you know! Marietta, I understand you have another question?

M. Allen: Yes, we do. This question is for Pete Piet and it's from Steve from the Alaska state office.

Yes, good morning. I would like to first just thank the management and people for putting on the conference. It's been a great conference and thanks for that. My question is concerning a program that hadn't really been talked about this morning, called the radio program and the

department has a policy now called Output 25. They are requiring us to buy digital radios and we are supposed to do this by 2005. It has the negatives we talked about, not all users want it, negative return on investment, and the bottom line is now, we've hit the department several times from the field trying to change the policy, maybe we can do with it with the energy, the systems we are requiring to buy are not 5, 10, 20they are up about 10 times the energy and I was wondering if there would be relief of this department policy.

H. Tipton: Pete, I am not sure how much you are up on this particular issue. Just to sort of frame where the policy came from for you before you answer, the department at-CIO Daryl White a few years ago did put out a -- I guess it was sort of an ultimatum that we convert to digital by 2005, and we've been struggling internally with each of our states in the purchase of what amounts to about $45 million worth of digital radios, and there currently is a waiver process in store for this through DARYL's office now, but it's pretty tough to get those, and I'm not sure just how conversant you are on the issue, but --

P. deWitt: All I can really say is if it gives us another Avenue to approach the question, not only the energy consumption, but also the usability, I think we ought to make that attempt. It just gives us another chance to bring the subject up in a forum that we know is of great interest to the Secretary, and we might get relief but I can't guarantee it.

H. Tipton: I hadn't heard the arguments on the energy consumption question. In -- Alaska as always is a separate and special place for us and I'm sure exactly what the status is up there, Steve, on the radios. But we would be glad to talk to you about those concerns.

M. Allen: He has a follow-on.

I would just like to mention, thanks for the answer. The waiver process is only a temporary process. Long term you are still supposed to switch another standard and it's not only an energy consumption problem in Alaska, but any site that uses repeaters down in the lower 48 would have that same problem and so it is a big problem, and there's only one vendor out there producing the radio. That is another problem. It's quite energy inefficient. So it is a problem. Thanks.

H. Tipton: Thanks for making the point. I believe we have a telephone call in? We're not ready for the telephone call in. Ok. I am supposed to go to Chris.

C. North: We're ready here on the floor. I have Linda Colville from the great state of Utah.

Thank you, Chris. He doesn't have to look up to me. I want to respond to the gentleman from Oklahoma who had a question about how you get middle managers involved in data quality, and to me that's a whole realm of things and I would like to tell you what would happen me with the various department and headquarters national efforts that we have going on. You know, data quality involves Data Standards and metadata and data capture and quality assurance and access. So it's a multi-varied questions. In Utah we're doing a lot of things, as I'm sure all states are, to deal with pieces of those questions, establishing data stewards and educating them, establishing a

process to select Data Standards for spatial data when our folks go and select that. And setting priorities for completing spatial data themes. Other states have a lot of other initiatives ongoing as well. What would help me and I believe would help my peers and everyone on the Utah leadership team with this whole large issue area is to have processes and tools, automated tools, to institutionalize those data quality assurance steps so that we assure quality as a natural part of doing our everyday business, so it's not added work to the extent that that's possible. That would help us a lot. Also, to the extent that we do have to undertake new work in order to do the tasks that are needed to assure data quality, to understand the total cost of that new work so that we can plan for it and figure out how to get that done. Those two things would help us, so I would just ask Piet as you look at DOI policies and Tip in DSDs and Nina has you look at the architecture, Data Standards project, the land use planning, I.T. support project and other projects we have national in scope, if you could look to help us provide pieces of those things, processes and tools to institutional data quality and understanding of the costs of the new work that we do have to take on, that's how you can help us meet our users' needs in Oklahoma and Bureauwide and in our public's.

H. Tipton: That sort of sounded like send money, Piet.

P. deWitt: Well, it's certainly a challenge.

M. Chavez: Listening to Linda talk, I hear us talking about the tools that we need to do this and I think we also need to focus in on publicizing our successes as we -- focus in on publicizing our successes as we step into use -- using our Data Standards and how standardized data helps us do our job better. Whether we are trying to share data with USGS or the Forest Service or internally, as we have successes because the data has been standardized, we need to make sure folks can see the benefits through those successes.

H. Tipton: That's an excellent point. Most everyone looks at this issue as well, what's in it for me? And there is something in it for everyone. It's our job to communicate and till what that was. Well, I understand our phone call was from the fraternal order of police looking for donations, so we're not going to take that one and we're going to move on now back to Chris on the floor. I'm sorry, mayor yet. -- Marietta.

M. Allen: This question is from Michelle and it's from Paula with the Milwaukee Field Office.

Hi. The question I have actually kind of spring boards off of the last question or comments that were made and it has to do with Data Standards. I think most folks are familiar with the Data Standards that have been wished our various automation efforts and how they have not necessarily come to the level of fruition that we have -- would have liked to have seen. Part of that has to do with the fact that not -- the standards did not fully address all of the information needs and the peculiar tease that occur within the Bureau. What will the boo Bureau do to make sure the future Data Standards will meet the needs of the people in the field?

M. Chavez: Thank you for that question. I am going to speak to that from my perspective as a

State Director and I think that either Bob or Tip might want also to chime in terms of nationally what we are going to be doing there. There is no question that as we deal with trying to standardize how we do business and collect our data, there's always going to be nuances. There's always going to be those exceptions to the rules, and we do have to recognize that. I think what we need to do is stay focussed on maintaining open communication so that as we start to move into more standardization, we don't lose sight of the need to continually assess, is this the most appropriate and most effective method of collecting our data, and are there some serious gaps or some serious areas where we need to perhaps adjust those standards so that, in fact, we're doing an adequate job of collecting the information so that you all can do the jobs on the ground and that we can share that data effectively. The important thing is for us to keep in mind that this doesn't end with a declaration of completion, that we continually are assessing the quality of our systems and our data and looking to where we have to make some adjustments and keep those communication lines open. Tip, do you have any other thoughts on that?

H. Tipton: Well, I certainly do. I have lots of thoughts on data because this is not the first time that there have been attempts to standardize and be more -- standardize our application of data. I understand the Bureau spent several million dollars in previous efforts to try to do this. The problem has always been getting the policies and the definitions and the standards implemented. So I think we have to look now at a stronger commitment from management to really enforce the standards and where there are needs for maybe variations or state versions of particular pieces of data that that be well documented. But in terms of developing what we look at as the corporate databases, there have to be few exceptions from that. And we also can note that we do have better editing tools to the extent that our data is going to be housed and distributed in a different way, we have more controls on the data that does go into these systems.

H. Bisson: Tip, this is Henri. I would like to jump in for a second as well. We have to start somewhere in terms of setting Data Standards, and you're right, there have been other efforts by the Bureau to -- from the resource programs to try to set standards to be used by everybody. They were just never fully accepted and they've certainly never been implemented. What we've done, though, this year with the start of the serious investment we're going to make in our land use planning is we've at least begun to set standards for the planning data that's going to be used and with the project that Gary Stuckey is leading, what we hope to do is wrestle this whole issue of Data Standards to the ground and to try to do what Linda is asking for, which is provide some guidance, some quality assurance up front as we proceed through all these jobs. Karen mentioned, it's an opportunity now for BLM and USGS to work together on various initiatives, including data, but there's a large neighbor that we have not had much interaction with. I think to this point they've chosen to work internally to develop their Data Standards and that's the Forest Service. And the Forest Service, my understanding, has invested more than $120 million in the last year-and-a-half developing Data Standards, and, you know, what we're doing is ensuring that Gary and other folks, our national data stewards, are communicating with the Forest Service so that we don't reinvent the wheel and to the extent the two largest land managing agencies can be consistent, I think it will be more effective in spending the money that we have. So we're very concerned about working closely with the Forest Service and not trying to invent Data Standards ourselves, and we'll be spending a lot of time working with them over the next six months.

Working across the Bureau and the departmental lines is very challenging and very difficult, but hen very right. We have to stay with it. There is' no choice.

H. Bisson: I think the best example of good payout is the effort that was initiated by our cultural staff and they really set out to achieve what I think ought to happen in most programs, which is a national effort to set standards and a national agreement on the data that's going to be used to make decisions in the cultural program that included the users. That's the state SHPOs. I think it's a terrific example and it's one I certainly am asking my group managers and our data stewards and our directorate to focus on.

H. Tipton: That's for sure. Well, data has been a very invigorating topic for the day, as it has been on our conference. So a lot of thought is going into that. On -- timewise I think we have time for one more question from the floor, and, Chris, I believe you're waiting for us?

C. North: I'm here with Pam from the Montana state office. Pam, your question?

I would like to direct the question initially to Tip and probably eventually to some of the other panel members. The government paper work elimination act and other laws are going to greatly affect the way we do business. I haven't heard much about BLM's plan to implement those initiatives. Do we have a plan which lists those processes and those records that are going to be automated before 2003 as required by GPEA?

H. Tipton: That's something that's had a lot of us scratching our head, Pam. And also the department is involved in this, in that a number of agencies as usual have been looking at how to address E-records and to gain compliance with that law. Independently. And ever since I have been in my job, the department has had us frozen with regard to procuring or developing any kind of a system to move in that direction. We do have some pilot efforts that we got waivers from the department on to do some trials with. So I can't say that waive a plan that I'm satisfied with that's going to make us compliant, but it's just something that we have to continue to work with the department on to the best that I can tell to see what the overall strategy is for bringing not only just us but all of the agencies into compliance with it. Does anyone else have a thought or a comment on that? From the panelists? I guess that's about all you're going to get, Pam. Anyway, thanks for raising the issue.

Thank you.

H. Tipton: I understand we can take one more question from the floor, and Marietta, do you have someone?

M. Allen: We do have a final question for you, Tip. This is from Georgia and she's from the Alaska state office. Georgia?

Hi, Tip. With the deployment of Tivoli, employees have become a bit nervous big brother is watching over them and I was wondering what assurances or reassurances you could give them like Martha Stewart would say, "it's a good thing"?

H. Tipton: That's kind of a loaded question now, Georgia. Tivoli can have that big brother appearance to it. But we have to acknowledge that we've spent at least a year in working with all the folks down in the states that are going to benefit from the use of Tivoli and we have worked out arrangements and working agreements through our SLA and I know I'm not supposed to use acronyms, but it's a service level agreement, I just now remembered what it was, that sort of defines the roles and responsibilities of how Tivoli will be implemented. First of all, there will be no mystery about the use of Tivoli. We want to have clear instructions and documentations out as to where the gains and how every one can benefit from the use of the tool. We hope to be fully deployed with Tivoli by the 15th of June in all of our states and centers, and some are already using it to some extent today. But we expect to have many gained efficiencies from Tivoli. We will at long last know what our I.T. assets are, and we can inventory and we hope this is going to make life easier throughout the field. So I guess the thing that I get constantly reminded from computer technicians at my level is, these are government computers, you know and we tend to look at these as our personal PCs at work when they really aren't and we just don't need to lose sight of that perspective and any concerns about private information on there or confidential information really shouldn't be stored on the computers in the first place. So we have to be real clear on the policies of just how we manage that type of information. So Tivoli is going to be a very positive asset for the Bureau. It's going to save us some time, it's going to save us some money and it will make life a lot easier.

M. Chavez: Tip, when I had the capability of Tivoli described to me, realizing there is that potential, it just seems to me that there is so much efficiencies associated with that. If I have something go wrong with my computer and I have to call the help desk and they can't quite figure out what's wrong, then they have to come up two flights of stairs and hover over my desk, I am probably sure I get a little more attention than perhaps other people in the state office, but, still, to have this capability where they can sit down and they can watch what's happening on my monitor, help me fix that, download software remotely, all of those things to me are just so exciting in terms of efficiencies that hopefully we can downplay the concerns and the worries about potential impacts to privacy and focus in on the efficiencies that we'll gain from this.

H. Tipton: That's true. Well, as we near the end of our broadcast, I would like to ask if any our panel members would like to have any last thing they would like to raise before I call on Piet and Nina.

M. Chavez: I guess I would just like to say that this has been fun. I have had some opportunities to see some folks I haven't seen in a while. Piet, it's great to see you here. And certainly every time I come to the Training Center with a gathering of specialists like this, I pick up more information than I walk away with and I think that's one of the key things to the seminar, if S I hope everyone leaves the seminar with a sense of having gained some additional information and maybe some contacts and I really congratulate you, Tip, on an excellent seminar.

H. Tipton: Thank you very much. I take this opportunity, as well, to personally thank all the folks who have contributed their time and the State Directors who have allowed them to contribute their time to work over this -- on this seminar for the last -- probably last six months.

These are very comprehensive things and not easy to put together. We've had some great comments and great questions today and raised a lot of level of excitement, and -- but before we go, I would like to give Piet deWitt our acting Assistant Secretary an opportunity for any closing thoughts he might want to add today.

P. deWitt: I hope these are appropriate in that has been a wonderful discussion. For somebody who is I.T.-challenged as I am, I am impressed with the huge array of challenges that lie before the Bureau. But I'm also struck with the sense of great energy and enthusiasm as your people work to -- work on the future of information technology in the Bureau. I think that the fact that you have this energy and enthusiasm is a guarantee that you will move down the road smartly and get to where you want to go. I was particularly impressed with Michelle's comments about the evolution and training of people and their growth with time. I think it's important that we remember while we are discussing programs and machines and devices this is really all about people. My real concern remains that we don't forget the people closest to the ground. They're the people that deliver to our customers. And we need to keep them always in the process. But this has been a wonderful discussion and I thank you for the opportunity to be here.

H. Tipton: Thank you very much, Piet. That's encouraging to hear from the Assistant Secretary's office. Now we want to give the final word to Nina, our Acting Director. Any closing thoughts for our viewers.

Dir. Hatfield: Thank you very much, tip. Was we go forward and try to deal making the appropriate managements reforms, it seems to me information technology really a key for us. Piet, I look at doing more with less probably a little differently because as I have said in the past, we in the Bureau are stretched so thinly in so many different areas, we're like a rubber band that's been pulled as far as we can go. But there's a lot that we can do in terms of trying to do our work more intelligently, and that's where I think the information technology offers us so many benefits. We are trying to operate about 60 national systems, about 600 state systems, and it's really the operation and maintenance of all those systems that's costing us so much money and so if we can move forward with our Enterprise Architecture, with being more effective in terms of GIS, creating Data Standards, using those Data Standards, doing all those things, we are going to significantly decrease our operations and maintenance costs. And what that means is that every dollar we save in terms of how we're trying to operate our I.T. systems goes directly into our program areas. So that's really key for us. It's really important for us to continue down the road we we're on in terms of trying to use our technology so much more efficiently. I've been carrying around for several years now a little quote from a book that was written by Edward O. Wilson in which he said we are drowning information while starving for wisdom. The world henceforth will be run by people able to put together the right information at the right time, think critically about it and make important choices Wisely. It seems to me that's exactly what we are trying to do here today, that it's significant that we just don't have a panel of people from the I.T. world, but we have a panel here that consists of people trying to marry up the technology and information systems with what we're trying to do in terms of the program sides of the house. And certainly for those of us in BLM, we're absolutely committed to making sure that we put together the right information and have that information at every employees' fingertips at the right time when they need to it make the best decisions. So thank you very much, tip, for having us here and

we've enjoyed it.

H. Tipton: Well, thanks to all of the panel members. This has really been excellent. And this concludes our show for today. So thanking those in Phoenix and again thanking you folks in Washington D.C. I want to also thank Chris and Marietta up on the seminar floor and all those who participated from Phoenix. Now we also need to remind all satellite downlink coordinators to let us know how many people from your office watched our program and how did we do. You can use NTC's automatic viewer reporting and evaluation system on the NTC homepage at www.ntc.blm.gov/satnet. Or you can complete the standard broadcast viewer roster and fax it to the NTC immediately following our show. Thanks for watching. And so long.

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